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Five Stages of the Construction of Kurdish Nationalism in Turkey

M. HAKAN YAVUZ

The construction and politicization of Kurdish ethno-nationalism in Turkey evolved in five stages. The state's policies are the determinant factors in the evolution and modulation of the Kurdish ethno-nationalism. Each stage examines the state-society relations and the way in which the Kurdish identity has been framed. The article argues that the major reason for the politicization of Kurdish cultural identity is the shift from multi-ethnic, multi-cultural realities of the Ottoman empire to the nation-state model. The new order of forced homogenizing of Turkish nationalism has been the major source of conflict in Turkey. The relatively successful modernization project of Mustafa Kemal in education, urbanization, and communication did not only create regional differences, but also helped to create a conscious Kurdish ethnic elite. After examining the role of Islam and communism as a 'surrogate identity' for Kurdish nationalism, the article also analyzes the processes of 'autonomization' of the Kurdish identity in the 1980s. Turkey must recognize the cultural rights of the Kurds and search for a new social contract in which the cultural mosaic of Turkey can flourish.

The construction and politicization of Kurdish ethno-nationalism in Turkey evolved in five stages.¹ The state's policies are the determinant factors in the evolution and modulation of the Kurdish ethno-nationalism. The major reason for the politicization of Kurdish cultural identity is the shift from multi-ethnic, multi-cultural realities of the Ottoman empire to the nation-state model. The old sources of legitimacy, i.e. Islam and the caliphate, were destroyed. The new order of forced homogenizing nationalism has been the major source of conflict in Turkey. The current waves of identity claims are the reflection of a deeper search for legitimacy and meaning in the post-Ottoman system. The politicization of ethnic identity in the Ottoman domain took place in the nineteenth century when the Ottoman Empire decided to *govern* not *rule* anymore.² The Sultan ruled some urban centres, but lacked the administrative means of bureaucracy and information to offer regularized and centralized administration throughout the empire. The centralization attempts brought the question of governance and this, in turn, created a conflict between local power structures and the state.

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M. Hakan Yavuz, University of Utah

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differences, but also helped to create a conscious Kurdish ethnic elite. The interpretation of this regional difference and the formation of new Kurdish elite are the very reasons for the mobilization of the Kurdish nationalism in Turkey.³ The overlap between the regional economic disparity and particular ethnic (Kurdish) identity is translated into Kurdish nationalism. The Kemalist reforms, which aimed to 'civilize' the people of Turkey to create a secular nation-state, resulted in the construction of Kurdish ethno-nationalism. Modern communication technology and political liberalization in the 1980s have played special roles as catalysts in the political articulation of the Kurdish identity. Ethnically politicized Kurdish intellectuals functioned as 'ethnic entrepreneurs' in Turkey by interpreting all present and past events in terms of historicizing and legitimizing Kurdish nationalism.⁴

This article identifies the dominant factors in the evolution of Kurdish identity in five historical stages. In the first stage, the impact of the centralization policies of the Ottoman state in the nineteenth century is examined. In response to these centralization policies and the penetration of European capitalism, local Islamic networks were politicized and mobilized. In this first section, the roles of the Nakşibendi and Kadiri orders as vehicles of resistance against the centralization of the Ottoman state and as means of identity formation (1878–1924) are stressed. The second stage (1925–61) examines the socio-political consequences of the transformation from a multi-ethnic Ottoman entity to a new 'nation-state' and the reaction of the Kurdish tribes to the nation-building project of Mustafa Kemal. These anti-centralization rebels demanded the maintenance of autonomous tribal structures which helped in the articulation of Kurdish proto-nationalism. The discourse of the new Republican ideology of Mustafa Kemal either denied the existence of the Kurds or reconstructed a political language to talk about the issue without pronouncing the word 'Kurds.' As a part of the radical nation-building reforms, Kurdish traditional notions of identity and culture were constructed as 'reactionary', 'tribal', and an outcome of regional 'backwardness.' The third stage (1962–83) examines the secularization of Kurdish identity within the framework of the broader leftist movement in Turkey between the 1960s and 1970s. The fourth stage (1983–98) is the PKK-led violent insurgency. The arrest of Abdullah Öcalan, the head of the PKK in 1999, represents the cusp of a still emerging fifth stage where some accommodation is possible between divergent Turkish and Kurdish aspirations. It should be noted that there are as serious divisions among Turks on the roles of culture and identity as there are among the Kurds in Turkey. The final stage started with the 'candidate status' of Turkey and the Europeanization of the Kurdish question in Turkey. As long as the Kurdish problems exist, Turkey will be crippled both inside

and out – doomed to live with the wear and tear of constant international criticism.

Fragmentation of Kurdish Identity

There is a growing tendency to analyze Kurdish nationalism as a 'natural' force.⁵ One needs to remind policy makers that nationalism, whether Turkish or Kurdish, is always constructed by 'identity entrepreneurs' and shaped by political context. The major difference between Turkish and Kurdish nationalism is the presence of the state. It is the modernizing nation-state which formed the Turkish nation and nationalism, and also stressed the civic aspect of the nation. Since Kurdish nationalism in Turkey, Iraq, and Iran evolved in response to modernizing nation-states, it constantly stresses its ethnic 'difference', sometimes even evoking racism to historicize itself. According to Anthony Smith, 'ethnie' (collective name, a common myth of descent, a shared history and culture, a specific territory, and a sense of solidarity) is necessary for the formation of nation.⁶ There is a Kurdish 'ethnie' as the precursor to the modern Kurdish nationalism, which contains ethnic roots, myths and collective memories and values. Kurdish nationalism is an outcome of the tension between the forces of homogenization and the struggle to maintain cultural and local autonomy. This tension is at the core of the politicization of the Kurdish culture.

Although Kurdish 'ethnic entrepreneurs' tend to identify Turks as their 'other' in the construction of Kurdish nationalism, there are major tribal, linguistic, religious, alphabetical, and regional fissures within Kurdish identity itself. The sources of these divisions are socio-historical, and they prevent the emergence of a full-fledged Kurdish identity. Kurdish life was tribally structured and based on local tightly knit rural communities under a tribal or religious leader, known as *ağa*, *şeyh*, *seyyid* or *molla*.⁷ The tribes, also known as *asiret* in Turkish, are kinship-based, territorially oriented, and religiously shaped solidarity groups. Nakşibendi or Kadiri sufi orders, which are lead by *şeyh*, have been utilized to integrate different Turkish or Arab groups into larger *asirets*. In many cases, since *ağa* is also the head of the Sufi order, he exercises a dual authority over his tribe. This tribal structure played a dual role: it prevented the formation of a Kurdish unity by keeping them fragmented, and preserved a heightened Kurdish particularism vis-à-vis the Turks, Persians, and Arabs. Tribal structure, constituted the core depository of Kurdish identity, facilitated mobilization against centralizing governments, and also prevented the formation of a modern conception of nationalism until the mid-twentieth century. In other words, allegiances among the Kurdish tribes are more fluid, but division itself is the constant feature. The Turkish state pursued three competing

policies: a) a policy of assimilation by breaking down tribal structure, which usually resulted in armed rebellion; b) a policy of co-optation of tribal leaders with the purpose of controlling these unruly regions; and c) a policy of divide and rule using one tribe against another.

In addition to tribal structure, another source of fragmentation of Kurdish identity is geography. The Kurds are a 'nation' in formation at the crossroads of the Persian, Arab, and Turkish worlds. Border characteristics allowed the Kurdish tribes a high degree of autonomy. There was a loose connection among the Kurdish tribes and between the centre and the sub-regional system of this borderland between the Persian and Ottoman empires. Most of the Kurds live in extremely rugged, mountainous terrain and this, in turn, separates each community from the other and also from the Arabs, Persians, and Turks. These rugged geographic conditions have been major factors in hampering the formation of Kurdish unity. Due to tribal structure and geographic conditions, diverse Kurdish dialects dominate the regions, and sub-ethnic identities are more powerful than Kurdish consciousness. No clan has ever wanted to see a rival clan succeed in leading Kurdish movements, and the central governments have never hesitated to use one tribe against another. Even the *Anfal* of Saddam Hussein, for instance, did not overcome the fragmentation of the Kurds in northern Iraq.⁸ Due to the centralization policies of the Ottoman state and the reforms of Mustafa Kemal, the least tribal and most politicized Kurds are those who live in Turkey. However, even in the case of Turkey, religious Sunni vs. Alevi, linguistic Kirmanji vs. Zaza, regional Western vs. Eastern, and class identities compete with a larger Kurdish identity.⁹

In the formation of modern Kurdish identity in Turkey, the confrontation between religious and secular forces plays an important role. Religious loyalties used to be more powerful among the Sunni-Kurds.¹⁰ For instance, some tribal chiefs claim to be a *seyyid*, genealogy traced to the family of the Prophet Muhammed, to justify their worldly power with religious qualifications. Islam has been both a unifying and dividing force among the Kurds. The religious divide between Sunni and Alevi Kurds has played a key role in the division of the Kurdish unity. This religious-cultural divide became the basis of different political trends within the Kurdish movement. For instance, Alevi Kurds strongly supported the reforms of Mustafa Kemal and became the incubator of leftist ideology in Turkey, whereas the Sunni Kurds supported the anti-Kemalist Islamic movement of Necmettin Erbakan. The gradual emancipation of the Alevis became a reality as a result of the reforms of Mustafa Kemal. By examining the evolution and politicization of Kurdish ethno-nationalism in Turkey, one might stress the socio-political process of de-linking Islam and Kurdish nationalism and the social forces, which simultaneously unify and fragment the Kurdish

identity. (In this article nationalism is defined as a self-determination seeking behaviour).

Stage I: Anti-Centralization Revolts and the Politicization of Islamic Identity

During the Ottoman period, ethnic identity had very little political significance. Religious identity shaped political loyalty. Attempts at centralization during the nineteenth century politicized peripheral ethnic and religious identities. Most of the Kurdish tribal revolts against the central government resulted from tribal reactions to the intrusive and centralizing policies of the modernization policies of the Ottoman state and the Republic of Turkey. These centralizing policies in terms of monopolizing violence and education threatened tribal autonomy and the interests of the *ağa* or *seyyid*. Some of these tribes resisted the extension of the rule of law in this region because it aimed at ending their feudal tyranny over local people. Thus, one should be extremely cautious when speaking about the nationalization of these anti-centralizing revolts by Kurdish nationalists.

The centralization of the Ottoman Empire aimed to destroy tribal ties and coalitions. This, in turn, empowered and reactivated Nakşibendi and Kadiri Sufi orders along with the emergence of the *seyh* as an integrative personality and a conflict manager between diverse Kurdish tribes, and even between the centralizing state and the tribal networks. In other words, the erosion of tribal ties enhanced Sufi networks and politicized Islamic identity. Kurdish ethnic awareness evolved within the framework of Islamic consciousness. In the anti-centralization movements, Nakşibendi Sufi networks did not only replace more aristocratic Kadiri orders, but also played a pivotal role. The first proto-religio-ethnic rebellion took place in 1880 under Seyh Ubeydullah (d. 1883), a local religious leader, in reaction to the centralizing policies of Sultan Abdulhamid II (reign 1878–1909). After putting this religio-tribal rebellion down, Sultan Abdulhamid II formed the Hamidiye Regiments from various Kurdish tribes to counter Russian-backed Armenian nationalism in eastern Anatolia. The officers and recruits of the Hamidiye Regiments played unforeseen roles in the constitution of Kurdish nationalism. For instance, some of the officers of the Hamidiye units 'helped Mustafa Kemal to regain independence for modern Turkey, and that the Kurdish nationalist party, Azadi [Freedom, established in 1923], also drew its membership' from these units.¹¹

The close ties between Islam and Kurdish nationalism did not develop as the close ties between Islam and Turkish nationalism continued. Islam has always played an important role in the vernacularization of Turkish nationalism, and the nationalists, in turn, redefined Islam as an integral part

of national identity. Turkish nationalism is essentially based on the cosmology of Islam and its conception of community. Although Turkey is a national and secular state, religion lies at the core of its identity debate and political landscape. The patterns of collective action, the meaning of justice and the organizational networks in Turkey are very much informed by Islamic practices and organizations. In the nineteenth century, the centralization policies of the Ottoman regime succeeded in the weakening of tribal structures but did not eliminate them. These policies resulted in the politicization of Islamic networks.

Stage II: National-Secularization Stage (1925–61)

Ethno-linguistic groups in the Ottoman state were classified not on the basis of ethnicity, but religion. Within the religious groups, diverse ethno-linguistic communities existed. The loss of this cosmopolitan character of the Empire, together with vast chunks of territory in the Balkans and the Middle East, left its imprint on Turkish political culture. The way in which the Ottoman Empire was weakened and partitioned by the European colonial powers left deep scars on the collective memory of Turks. During and after the First World War, Kurdish cultural committees were formed in major Kurdish cities.¹² As a result of this political mobilization and the British support for an independent Kurdish state, Şerif Paşa presented the Kurdish case in subsequent international conferences. The 1920 Sevres Treaty, which constitutes the Kemalist state discourse to identify internal and external enemies, created 'local autonomy for the land where the Kurd element predominates' (Article 62–64). Although never put into practice, the Sevres Treaty remains in the collective memory of the Turkish state. Fear of partition still haunts Turkish society and breeds continuing suspicion of foreigners and their sinister domestic collaborators.

Before the First World War, many European powers became the defender of certain minorities and used 'minority rights' to get more concessions from the state. During the First World War, the Ottoman Empire was partitioned, and the heartland of the empire, Anatolia and Rumelia, was occupied. As a result of World War I and the Turko-Greek War, which lasted from 1919 to 1922, there were few non-Muslim peoples left in Anatolia. The majority of Turkey's Armenians were deported to Syria and Mesopotamia in 1915, so that they would not side with advancing Russian troops and declare independence in the eastern part of the empire. The remaining Orthodox Greek population, who had not fled after the Turko-Greek War, was exchanged for Muslims in Greece according to the Lausanne Treaty of 1923. The transition from a multicultural cosmopolitan Ottoman empire to a Republican Turkey resulted in the promotion of a

homogenous secular nationalism that did not tolerate diversity and insisted that all inhabitants become Turks.

Due to the Ottoman legacy, Turkey embodies an irresolvable paradox in the foundation of the Republic in the 1920s. On the one hand, the state, formed as a result of demographic Islamization of the country, used Islam to unify diverse ethno-linguistic groups; on the other hand, it defined its 'progressive' civilizing ideology, known as Kemalism, in opposition to Islam. It called upon the men and women of Turkey to participate in a *jihad* against the occupying European armies to liberate their homeland and caliphate. In the Treaty of Lausanne, it stressed the common religious identity of Turks as Muslims and referred to non-Muslims as a 'minority.'¹³ Turkey, by refusing to accept ethnicity as the basis of its national identity, instead based its national identity on religio-territorial identity. Islamic identity, which consists of religious devotion and ritual practices and a set of historically structured socio-political roles and schematic frames to signify and punctuate events, experiences, and objects, was the integrative glue in the establishment of the Turkish Republic. Turkish national identity was modeled on the Islamic conception of community and disseminated through Islamic terms. By incorporating religious vocabulary, such as *millet* (referring to a religious community in the Ottoman empire, appropriated by the Republic to mean nation), *vatan* (homeland), *gazi* (referring to those who fought in the name of Islam, and becoming the title of Mustafa Kemal), *şehid* (those who die for the protection and dissemination of Islam), into the nationalist vocabulary to vernacularize and disseminate national identity, Islamic identity was nationalized. Islam remained imbedded both within and outside and continued, for the most part, to provide the hidden identity of the Turkish state.

After the 1925 Sheik Said Rebellion against the new Republic, the nation building process was intensified.¹⁴ Again, the caliphate, which was abolished in 1924, represented an Islamically-sanctioned union of multi-ethnic groups, and recognized ethnic diversity without assigning any political role. In other words, the caliphate was the symbol of a multi-ethnic polity and authority; it symbolized the unity of Muslims as a faith-based community and allowed space for diverse loyalties and local autonomy for the periphery. The aim of the 1925 rebellion was to preserve this religiously sanctioned religio-tribal structure of the region. The rebellion used Islamic networks and frames to expand its social base to receive support from other anti-secularist Sunni-Turks.

Sheik Said of the Nakşibendi order was initially successful and even controlled the surrounding of Diyarbakır and Elazığ. However, tribal rivalry and religious divisions prevented full Kurdish participation. Although the Turkish army captured Sheik Said (1865–1925) and hanged him in

Diyarbakir, his rebellion, the first ethno-religious uprising, made the Turkish Republic very suspicious of any form of Kurdish activities. In October 1927, a group of Kurdish tribal leaders and intellectuals formed the Kurdish National League (*Hoyboun*) under the leadership of İhsan Nuri Paşa of Bitlis, a successful Ottoman general. This group organized the revolt of Ağrı (Ararat) mountain between 1930–31. The Turkish army had difficulty putting the rebellion down in its early stages due to the better arms the rebels received from outside. The Turkish military defeated the Kurdish rebellion and İhsan Paşa took refuge in Iran. In order to establish law and order in the region, the 1934 Law organized a selective deportation and exiled some Kurdish tribal chiefs to western Turkey. The assimilationist policies and external involvement triggered a new revolt in and around the mountainous areas of Dersim inhabited mostly by the Alevi Kurds, known as Zazas, in 1937–38.¹⁵ After suppressing the rebellion, which attacked several key military posts and killed hundreds of soldiers, the Turkish state erased Dersim from the map and renamed it Tunceli.

These three rebellions against the young and inexperienced Republic created a cumulative image of the people of the region as socially tribal, religiously fanatic, economically backward, and most important, a threat to the national integrity of the Republic of Turkey. The way in which the state framed the Kurdish resistance sought to legitimize the state's claims and justify its domination. In other words, the Kemalist state discourse on the Kurdish issue evolved as a result of these rebellions. The state became more sensitive about its policies of creating a secular Turkish nation. Thus, one needs to take these rebellions into account to explain the representation of the Kurdish question by the state. The Republic did not deny the existence of the Kurds, but rather developed a new discourse to speak about them without pronouncing the word 'Kurd' in the ethno-national sense. By constructing the Kurdish tribal structure as 'reactionary, backward, and dangerous', the Turkish Republic constructed itself as modern, secular and progressive. After the rebellions, politicized Sunni-Islam evolved as a surrogate Kurdish identity in Southeastern Anatolia. For instance, the Islamist National Outlook Movement of Necmettin Erbakan remained a powerful force among the Sunni-Kurds until the 1995 elections.¹⁶

After 1925, multiple identities that had prevailed during the Ottoman period officially coalesced into secular ethnic Turkish nationalism. The historians of the Kemalist period and the official Turkish Historical and Language Society redefined identity in terms of ethnicity and language. The state used the army, education, media, and art to consolidate Turkish national identity and attempted to diminish the role of Islam and its Ottoman legacy. Nevertheless, during the formative Kemalist period (1922–50), two

versions of nationalism actually competed: secular linguistic nationalism and ethno-religious communal nationalism.

Nationalism and secularism constituted the core of the Kemalist ideology in Turkey. The Kemalist project of secularism aimed to 'civilize' cultural and social domains of the nation. Although nationalism presupposes a creation of an ethnically homogenous society at the expense of other identities, 'race' never became a constituting element of being a Turk, but rather 'being a citizen of the Republic of Turkey (civicness)' was the foundation of the nationalism.¹⁷ The 1924 Constitution provides: 'Without religious and ethnic difference, every person of the people of Turkey who is a citizen is regarded as Turk.' Being a Turk is defined in terms of legal ties with the state. This definition reflected the legacy of the Ottoman Empire – everyone with Ottoman citizenship was considered as Ottoman. The 1961 Constitution gets rid of the 'people of Turkey' (*Türkiye ahalisi*) and provides that every citizen is 'accepted as Turk regardless of ethnic and religious identity.' One sees the gradual ethnification of the term 'Turk' in the 1961 and 1982 constitutions. Under article 66 of the 1982 Constitution, everyone who is related to the Republic of Turkey with citizenship is a Turk. In modern Turkey, the term 'Turkish nation' includes all Turkish citizens whatever their ethnic roots. Turkish citizens of Kurdish origin represent a new conceptualization that has been put into use in response to European pressures.

Stage III: Secularization of the Kurdish Question through Socialism (1961–83)

The secularization and transformation of Kurdish identity took place within the broader leftist movement in Turkey in the 1960s and 1970s. This secularization of Kurdish identity took place as a result of interaction with socialist ideology. Alevi Kurds played a critical role in this process of secularization. With the spread of universal education and the socio-political liberalization as a result of the 1961 Constitution, new modern intellectuals rather than tribal and religious leaders started to shape Kurdish identity. Under the 1961 Constitution, Kurdish intellectuals expressed Kurdish concern and grievances in socialist idioms to promote the self-determination of the Kurds. The Kurds, particularly the Alevi Kurds, dominated Turkey's left-wing movement in the 1970s. Between 1965 and 1968, the bilingual Turkish-Kurdish *Dicle-Fırat* and *Deng* magazines were published. In the late 1960s, the Kurdish identity question was expressed in terms of regional economic inequalities and suggested a socialist solution.¹⁸ At its Fourth National Congress, the Labour Party of Turkey, passed a resolution which said 'there is a Kurdish people in the East of Turkey.' The

goal of this statement was to carve a socialist base for the Labour Party by using the ethnic card. In the 1970s, leftist groups and identities were used to challenge the 'central political authority' in Ankara. Criticism of the centre was the major unifying force of the leftist movement.

Another major development was the establishment of the Revolutionary Cultural Society of the East (DDKO is its Turkish acronym) in 1969, the first organizational attempt to raise the consciousness of the Kurdish population by stressing the uneven economic development within regions of the country. The leftist movement in Turkey always tried to expand its base by stressing Alevi and Kurdish issues. During 1969–71, the DDKO organized regular teach-ins to raise Kurdish consciousness throughout Turkey. Abdullah Öcalan took part in DDKO activities and established connections with other students when he was in Istanbul in 1970.¹⁹ The DDKO blended Marxism and Kurdish nationalism to mobilize the youth in the name of social justice and identity.²⁰ Some leaders of the DDKO were active members of the Turkish Labour Party. With the 1971 coup, the Labour Party and the DDKO were outlawed. Although in 1974 ex-members of DDKO tried to revive the outlawed DDKO under the Revolutionary Democratic Cultural Associations (DDKD), they were not successful in creating a unified Kurdish organization due to ideological, regional and personal rivalries. In the 1970s, the Kurdish nationalists started to challenge the Kemalist view. In 1979 a cabinet minister, Serafettin Elçi, by openly declaring himself as a Kurd, caused a scandal. After the 1980 coup, the state identified Kurdish nationalism, along with radical Islam and the Left, as a divisive force and banned all forms of cultural expression.

One of the key goals of the 1980 coup was the control of the centrifugal forces of Kurdish and religious movements.²¹ The coup used oppressive measures and destroyed the organizational power of Kurdish networks within Turkey. It jailed many Kurdish activists and some of them took refuge in Europe, where they formed the core of a transnational Kurdish activism. In short, the oppression of the 1980 coup had the opposite impact by further politicizing and strengthening the Kurdish sense of identity and this, in turn, was used by the PKK. The policies of the Turkish military and the regional developments in Iraq and Iran further consolidated Kurdish separatism, and the PKK launched an armed uprising to defeat the Turkish state in 1984. No Kurdish organization captured the mind and resources of the Kurds as much as the PKK. Yet, there is no single sociological study of this organization. Peasant tribes and religious Kurds were the least ethnic conscious sector of the population, reflecting instead an *umma* (religious community) view of the state-society relations. They established a sense of *difference* from Ankara by utilizing the Safai idiom of Islam. Tribes stress Islam because Islam does not negate tribal identities and offers a common

space for communication and interaction. In newly created suburbs of Diyarbakir, Istanbul, and Ankara, peasants cut off from traditional ties became centres of Kurdish nationalism.

In the late 1990s, Kurdish nationalism was still 'in formation' and composed of different heterogeneous groups. In the formation of this new politicized Kurdish identity, class questions have been perceived in national (Kurdish) terms. Kurdish nationalism offered a space within which class and regional differences could be suppressed. In short, it was the PKK which ended the mutually constitutive relationship between Islam, tribe, and nationalism in favour of the latter.

Stage IV: The Emergence of the PKK (1983–99)

Kurdish nationalists have employed 'repertoires of violence', ranging from the PKK- led terror campaign to the establishment of mainly Kurdish parties, to the struggle for cultural and political rights. Many Turks feel that exclusion and racism are problems of individual bigotry and hatred, while the Kurds often understand it as an intricate web of individual attitudes and cultural messages about marginalized Kurds. The Kurdish perception of Turkey's socio-political realities is filtered through this new Kurdish nationalism.

The PKK played a critical role in raising Kurdish political consciousness, establishing a web of networks in and outside Turkey to recruit militants, undermining the religio-tribal structure of the region by presenting new opportunities for the middle class and urbanized Kurdish youth, and unexpectedly popularizing and consolidating Turkish nationalism in Turkey. One of the most important unexpected outcomes of the PKK campaign was the deepening politicization of Turkish nationalism. As a result of the PKK terror campaign against all walks of Turkish life, Turkish nationalism has been popularized and articulated in almost all-public gatherings. The PKK activities encouraged Kurds to criticize not the 'political authority' in Ankara, but rather Turkish nationalism as a construct, in order to legitimize their own separatist nationalism. This new twist from being critical of the state power to being critical of Turkish nationalism has represented a turning point in the separation of Kurdish nationalism and the leftist movement of Turkey.

As a result of a centralized education system, urbanization, and population displacement, a new wave of Kurdish youth came to major cities to study or work. This became the movement of first generation Kurdish university students, who had doubts about finding jobs and encountered a new socio-economic life in the cities with very little means to benefit and join. The PKK targeted these 'displaced' and 'semi-intellectual university

students' in terms of offering identity (Kurdish nationalism) and commitment to justice (socialist economic order). During this disintegration of the social fabric as a result of major social transformation in the 1970s, the PKK presented itself as a 'liberation movement' and voiced the desire to restore Kurdish identity and justice by violent means. The 1980 coup and its oppressiveness helped to create a siege mentality among the Kurds, compelling them to think that their future was constrained and contained by the Turkish state. They had two options: move to Europe as political refugees and search for a new life, or join the PKK to fight against the Turkish state. The PKK became more popular as the oppression of the military coup increased.

The PKK remained under the autocratic leadership of Abdullah Öcalan, who was born in 1948 in a village in Urfa, the son of an impoverished Kurdish farmer. Öcalan studied political science at the prestigious Faculty of Political Science in Ankara University in 1971. Due to his involvement in an underground leftist movement, he was arrested in 1972 and spent seven months in Mamak military jail in Ankara. He did not graduate from the university. By 1973, he had organized a Marxist group – which initially included Kurdish as well as Turkish militants – and whose goal was socialist revolution in Turkey. After years of recruiting and indoctrinating followers, the PKK was established on 27 November 1978. Öcalan's personality was strongly shaped by his childhood experiences and the socio-political conditions of southeastern Turkey. He developed a deep animosity against the traditional structure of the Kurdish society in which his family had no standing. This aversion extended to the Turkish state. His main goal was to destroy the traditional Kurdish societal structure and create a socialist pan-Kurdish state.

Öcalan's PKK engaged in a campaign of terror against the officials of the Turkish state. Its main goal was to destabilize Turkey and create an independent Kurdish state with the support of some foreign countries, like Syria, Greece, and Russia. For more than two decades, Öcalan operated from Syria and Syrian-occupied Lebanon. The PKK is responsible for the indiscriminate killing of moderate Turkish Kurds both in Turkey and in Europe. It consistently targeted the educational infrastructure in the region, branding the public schools as 'instruments of Ankara's assimilation policy.' The PKK reportedly killed two hundred teachers and destroyed 150 schools to 'stop assimilation' and it blew up bridges, hospitals and slaughtered 'collaborators.' It killed Kurds and Turks alike so long as the victims were perceived as pro-state. The PKK and its leadership never tolerated dissent from the party line and considered assimilated Kurds as the 'biggest enemy.' In his interview with M. Ali Birand, Öcalan gave a number of examples of how he punished perceived disloyal acts.²² The PKK failed

to generate popular support among many Kurds yet politicized their consciousness. The PKK also killed many moderate Kurds and forced families to give up a son or daughter to serve the PKK.

The PKK, according to German intelligence sources, has 10,000 supporters among the half million Kurds in Germany.²³ It also managed to mobilize 20,000 Kurds for political campaigns. Although PKK militants are in a small minority, they are well-organized and violent.²⁴ It has also been reported that the PKK is involved in heroin (and illegal alien) traffic throughout Western Europe, developing lucrative investments to support its activities. It supported the London-based television station (MED-TV), an extensive Internet presence, and funding of Kurdish organizations in Europe and North America. The PKK carried out its political activities in Europe by using the ERNK (Kurdistan Liberation Front). In recent months ex-PKK activists who were part of the Kurdistan Parliament in Exile formed the Kurdish National Congress (KNK).

In order to contain and repress the PKK-led activities, the Turkish state pursued a number of policies. One of the major social costs of the PKK vs. the state conflict was the securitization of normal life in the heavily Kurdish populated provinces. The Kurdish-inhabited zone of south-eastern Anatolia has been under Regional State of Emergency Governorate (known as *OHAL*) for about almost 20 years. The fight against the PKK was carried out under the martial law until *OHAL* was introduced in 1987. The *OHAL* region included Bingöl, Diyarbakir, Elazığ, Hakkari, Mardin, Siirt, Tunceli and Van and subsequently expanded to Adıyaman, Bitlis, and Muş. In 1990, the number of provinces in the *OHAL* region included Batman and Sırnak as well. First, Elazığ and Adıyaman were removed from the *OHAL* region. *OHAL* regions are subject to special decrees of the government and these decrees are not subject to the supervision of the Constitutional Court. The *OHAL* region has been subjected to a different legal and administrative rule from the rest of the country. This different legal and administrative rule has further consolidated Kurdish nationalism.

According to state statistics, since 1984, as many as 4,302 civil servants, 5,018 soldiers, 4,400 civilians, and 23,279 PKK terrorists were killed in the region, and thousands wounded. Many Kurdish families lost their sons. Recruited from the ages of 15 to 40 by the PKK to fight for a separate state, many Kurdish young men were wounded on the front lines of the separatist war. There is no neighbourhood that does not carry the scars of the war.²⁵ An entire generation of youth was born and socialized into this bloody and violent culture. Thousands of Kurds left the country in search of security and peace. The social and political milieus were torn apart, and socio-cultural fault lines were politicized. This, in turn, politicized the Kurdish consciousness and radicalized ethnic nationalism. The human cost of the

PKK terror also includes the new generation whose image is shaped by the OHAL conditions. Sources of livelihood in the region, stockbreeding and agriculture, were destroyed. During the conflict, the government displaced and vacated a total of 4,000 villages and other hamlets, and approximately one million people were relocated to cities for security reasons.²⁶ These people who were forced out of their villages constitute a major source of the problems in large cities. Crime in big cities has increased and most of the criminals are purportedly Kurdish youth who are jobless and have little hope in the future. These new urban settlers are less likely to return to their villages which are in ruin. This region is practically not a part of Turkey as a result of OHAL, and the government needs to end this emergency rule to unify the country.

The conflict has eroded the rule of law, and the state has used ultra rightist gangsters and religious fanatics to fight against Kurdish nationalists. For instance, Hizbullah, a fundamentalist religious organization, used weapons that were imported by the governor of Batman.²⁷ Salih Salman, governor of Batman in the mid-1990s, was instrumental in the formation of Hizbullah, a terrorist group believed to have killed suspected members of the PKK. Young Hizbullah assassins operated in broad daylight in mainly Kurdish provinces and targeted anyone who opposed the Islamic Republic of Kurdistan. The Turkish state was involved in a no-holds-barred war against the PKK militants and remained deaf to allegations that its security services were working together with Hizbullah assassins. Hizbullah members are usually first generation Kurds from major urban centres. Hizbullah is mainly an urban organization. Its aim was to establish an Islamic Republic of Kurdistan by overthrowing the secular system in Turkey.

Stage V: The Kurdish Problem as a European Problem: The Post-Helsinki Situation

Despite the PKK's attacks on civilian targets, the majority of Turks trust the military officials and have not given in to the fear sown by the PKK, which has targeted teachers, doctors, journalists, businessmen, police and army officers. Since the 1983 insurrection the Kurds have grown accustomed to being despised and rejected. Even in some urban cities, the conflict has turned into a Kurdish-Turkish one. In order to prevent the further polarization of society along ethnic lines, the military decided to use all means to stop PKK activities.

On 16 September 1998, the commander of the Turkish Army General Atilla Ateş, on an inspection tour on the Syrian border, issued the following statement: 'some of our neighbours, especially Syria, are misinterpreting

our efforts and goodwill for having good ties. By supporting the bandit Apo they have helped plunge Turkey into the trouble of terrorism... Our patience is exhausted.'²⁸ After this statement, Süleyman Demirel, then president of Turkey, also issued a sharper statement by condemning Syria and indicated Turkey's readiness to 'retaliate' against Syria. As a result of Egyptian mediation, Turkey and Syria signed the Adana Memorandum on 20 October 1998. Syria committed to stop supporting PKK terror and closely worked with Turkey to remove Öcalan from Lebanon. The key reason that Syria caved into Turkish pressures is the isolation of Syria as a result of the collapse of the Soviet Union. It was deprived of the Soviet Union's military support. Its army could not even find spare parts for its Soviet-made weaponry. The second reason Turkey pursued a confrontational policy against Syria in 1998 had to do with Turkey's close ties with Israel and the United States. The Turkish army came to the conclusion that Syria's ability to wage war is limited. Moreover, between 1983–94, the Turkish army shifted its traditional and confused strategy to a more flexible doctrine of 'low intensity conflict.' It retrained and equipped itself to carry out a long-term low intensity conflict. As a part of this 'low intensity conflict', in order to be more flexible and mobile, the army reorganized itself from division to brigade lines. The Turkish armed forces evolved from being a overgrown and sluggish giant into an organization with an effective system of command, control and communications. The delegation of power to local command played an important role in defeating the PKK terror.

In response to Turkey's determined position, the Syrian government forced Öcalan to leave for Moscow. Then he took refuge in Rome and eventually the Turkish military brought him to Turkey from Nairobi, Kenya on 16 February 1999.²⁹ After his arrest Öcalan told journalists 'I really love Turkey and the Turkish people. My mother is Turkish. Sincerely, I will do all I can to be of service of the Turkish state.'³⁰ His brother Osman Öcalan, who was the second-man in command, called on all Kurds to attack the Turkish state. He said 'the Kurds throughout the world should 'extract a heavy price from the Turkish state for the conspiracy it has engaged in against our leadership.'³¹ The 6th PKK Congress authorized its military arm the Peoples Liberation Army of Kurdistan (ARGK) 'to wage a war that will make the Turkish state tremble' and called for a *serhildan* (Kurdish *intifadah*).³²

The PKK tried to use all means against the Turkish state, but their call for mass violence did not materialize. The worst attack took place in Istanbul, when a group calling itself the 'Revenge Hawks of Apo' attacked a shopping mall and killed 13 people in Kadıköy. The arrest of Öcalan and the defeat of the PKK shattered the common myth of its image as a 'heroic and undefeatable' nationalist organization among the Kurds. The arrest of

Öcalan helps to overcome the appealing image of the PKK, but it does not address the violence-ridden culture and reliance on force to solve social conflicts. For instance, there are more Kurdish youth in jail in Germany than Turks even though the Kurds are only one fifth of the population.

The PKK-led protracted insurgency was ended by the Turkish military. After his arrest, Öcalan revealed PKK ties with Greece and Russia. Öcalan was tried at the State Security Court between 31 May and 29 June 1999. During his trial, Öcalan offered 'to serve the Turkish state' and declared 'the democratic option . . . is the only alternative in solving the Kurdish question. Separation is neither possible nor necessary.'³³ During his statements, Öcalan praised Atatürk's attempt to create a secular and European state and sharply criticized 'the Seyh Said uprising of 1925 and traditional tribal system which promoted land lords – *ağas*.'

The court found him guilty of separatist treason and sentenced him to death. The Court of Appeals upheld his sentence on 25 November 1999. His lawyers took the case to the European Court of Human Rights (ECHR) to which Turkey belongs. The ECHR issued an interim measure asking Ankara to suspend the execution until it could rule on the appeal. The Turkish government agreed to wait for the final decision of the Court.³⁴

After his arrest, Öcalan, without hope to sustain his terror activities to defeat the Turkish state, gave up the armed struggle and pursued a policy of internationalizing the Kurdish question. In response to Öcalan's call to give up arms, eight PKK members, under the leadership of Ali Sapan, the former PKK spokesman in Europe, surrendered themselves to the Turkish police on 1 October 1999. The second wave of surrender took place on 29 October 1999, as some more PKK activists flew from Vienna, Austria, and surrendered in Istanbul. At the 7th Extraordinary Congress of the PKK in Northern Iraq on 7 February 2000, the leadership of the PKK decided to give up the armed and adopt a democratic struggle. Öcalan's arrest robs the PKK of a charismatic, yet brutal killer, but opens a possibility to refashion itself in a more civilized, democratic and peaceful organization.

The EU Helsinki summit on 10–11 December 1999, declared Turkey 'is a candidate state destined to join the Union on the basis of the same criteria as applied to the other candidate states.' The European Copenhagen political criteria (passed at the EU summit in Copenhagen in 1993) require full implementation of democracy, human rights, the rule of law, and the protection of minorities.³⁵ On the basis of the Copenhagen criteria, the EU asked Ankara to reform its legal system and solve the Southeast problem with peaceful means. This represents a turning point in Turco-EU relations and has created an optimistic environment to end the tragic conflict, which resulted in 30, 000 deaths and a cost of more than \$100 billion. Mesut Yılmaz of the Motherland Party reflected on the EU requirements on the

Kurdish problem maintaining, '[t]he road to the EU passes through Diyarbakır... Democracy is the right of both the Turk and the Kurd.'³⁶ On 12 December, 1999, Foreign Minister İsmail Cem during an interview with CNN-Turkey, aired his views that 'broadcasting in other mother tongues should be allowed.' Prime Minister Ecevit distanced himself from Cem by saying that those are 'Cem's views not the government's.'³⁷ Moreover, Cumhur Asparuk, General Secretary of the National Security Council, told the media that Turkey cannot allow either education or broadcasting in Kurdish on the ground that this would 'tear apart the mosaic of Turkish society.'³⁸ Süleyman Demirel was the first Turkish politician to recognize publicly the existence of Kurds in Turkey in a speech in Diyarbakır, just after the November 1991 elections. He also toyed with the idea of constitutional citizenship, that is, nationality defined not by ethnic factors, but by sharing of equal citizenship rights and obligations.

How to Manage Turkey's Kurdish Problem: Decentralization and the Recognition of Cultural Rights

Turkey needs to recognize the cultural rights of the Kurds by lifting the ban on Kurdish broadcasting, allowing education in Kurdish, and forming a pro-Kurdish political party. The EU might function as an intermediary between Kurdish aspirations and the Turkish state. Turkish Kurds are divided on the question of Europe's role. The extreme nationalists regard the European integration as an obstacle to the achievement of its goal of a united pan-Kurdistan. By contrast, Serafettin Elçi and other moderates have enthusiastically supported the notion of a Europe of Regions capable of providing the context for political accommodation between the Republic of Turkey and the Kurds.

The Kurdish question represents an abrupt and lethal injection into Turkish-European relations. Those Europeans who would like to build a cultural boundary between Turkey and the EU, present the Kurdish question as a minority problem, knowing that Turkey cannot treat the Kurds as a 'minority.' Given the impact of the Ottoman collapse and the utilization of minority rights against the Ottoman state, Turkey will not grant 'minority status' to the Kurds or collective group rights.³⁹ The best hope for a lasting peace in Turkey is to divorce ethnic identity and political access. As a result of EU pressures, Turkey is likely to devolve central power to municipalities and recognize individual cultural and political rights of the Kurds within the territorial boundaries of Turkey.

When Guenter Verheugen, EU Commissioner for Enlargement, visited Ankara in July 2000 and submitted a draft Accession Partnership Document (APD) listing legal reforms that would have to be implemented before EU

membership, he created a major uproar in the Turkish media due to the inclusion of the word 'minority.' The APD included broadcasting and education rights for the Kurds, abolition of the death penalty, greater freedom of expression, and reform of the military-dominated National Security Council. The APD has identified a 'road map' to Turkey's full membership. The APD stressed democratization of Turkey and recognition of the cultural mosaic in Turkey without presenting the Kurdish question as a 'minority' problem.

After the EU report the divisions within the state became more clear. For instance, Turkey's National Intelligence Agency (MIT) chief, Senkal Atasagun, started the debate within the state by airing his views on the PKK. In his published interviews, Atasagun argued that it would be against Turkish interests to hang Öcalan. He was also in favour of ending a ban on Kurdish language broadcasting and setting up a state-controlled television channel in Kurdish.⁴⁰ Prime Minister Bülent Ecevit has spoken out in favour of comments made by Atasagun.⁴¹ The major opposition to the APD stems from the military and the Nationalistic Movement Party (MHP), a partner in a tripartite coalition government, which is against multi-culturalism and supports the homogenizing policies of the state. Its ardent statism in public limits democratic debate in the country. Devlet Bahçeli, the leader of MHP, reacted to the APD on several grounds. By refusing any reference to the cultural diversity of Turkey, Bahçeli argued

It is impossible for Turkey to look favourably upon 'cultural' and 'ethnic rights' which will only serve to fan the flames of ethnic conflict and discrimination. In addition, attempts to gloss over these kinds of expressions in the document will not alter the facts of the matter.⁴²

By saying this Bahçeli echoed some of the concerns of the Turkish military in regard to ethnicity and cultural rights. The army also voiced concern that allowing Kurdish-language broadcasts in the country as required to join the European Union could damage the integrity of the state. The MHP is firmly against introducing Kurdish education, removing the death penalty and scrapping Article 312 of the penal code, which limits freedom of expression.⁴³ The army has defined EU membership as a geostrategic and ideological necessity to realize Mustafa Kemal's goal of becoming a western nation-state, but it remains very suspicious of the unexpected consequences of the Copenhagen criteria, which requires restructuring of Turkey's defunct legal and administrative system. In response to the APD call to liberalize education in different languages, Aslan Güner, the secretary-general of the general staff told the Anatolia news agency that 'the concern of the military is that it may disrupt Turkey's

unitary structure. We cannot remain strong if divided.’⁴⁴ When Ecevit was in Nice to attend the EU meeting, the military issued a harsh warning on the liberalization of the Kurdish question. The General Staff statement contained warnings along the following lines:

Certain attempts made in recent days – especially those involving Kurdish education and broadcasting – reflect the outlawed PKK’s efforts to gain a political character. Certain European Union member countries have provided the PKK with support – overtly or otherwise. These countries are the sole factor enabling the PKK to survive. The PKK is now ostensibly issuing calls for peace in the country but in reality it is planning to create a pure separatist political movement. The PKK aims to get organized through certain legal organizations to create and develop a political separatist movement based on ethnic nationalism.⁴⁵

Due to opposition from the military, pro-EU forces within the state seek to liberalize the legal system by signing international treaties and presenting legal changes in law as a requirement of international obligations rather than responding to the Kurdish pressures.⁴⁶ For instance, Turkey has signed the Covenant on Individual and Political Rights and the Covenant on Economic, Cultural and Social Rights in August 2000. After signing these documents, Şerafettin Elçi, the former chairman of the banned Democratic Mass Party (DKP), called on Ankara to ‘grant everybody the right to freely use his or her own language in educating and broadcasting in Kurdish’ as a requirement of these new UN conventions.⁴⁷ Today, there are 28 Kurdish radio stations and five Kurdish television stations that operate in Turkey. There are a multitude of Kurdish newspapers and magazines in wide circulation throughout Turkey.

On 19 March 2001, the government of Turkey declared the National Programme (NP). On the Kurdish issue, which has been a major source of contention in Turkish-EU dialogue, the programme did not commit itself to allow education in Kurdish. The NP stressed that ‘[t]he official language and the formal education language of the Republic of Turkey is Turkish. This, however, does not prohibit the free usage of different languages, dialects and tongues by Turkish citizens in their daily lives. This freedom may not be abused for the purposes of separatism and division.’⁴⁸ The terms ‘Kurdish’ or ‘education in mother tongue’ do not appear in the programme. It was clear from NP that the military commanders and an ultra-nationalistic MHP are resisting many of those conditions that the EU has been insisting on. The EU wanted to see full civilian control over the military by weakening the National Security Council. The programme does not suggest radical changes to the National Security Council because the military wants

to preserve what in effect is a veto over government decisions. The programme stops short of offering full linguistic rights to the Kurds, civilian control over the military, or withdrawal of Turkish troops from the divided island of Cyprus. The programme is less likely to meet the expectations of Europeans and Turkish society. It is another strategy of the nationalistic front in Turkey to gain time. This programme does not indicate any willingness to be a member of the EU, but rather seeks to postpone it. The nationalistic front has propagated its own authoritarian values, such as 'national democracy', 'national human rights', 'national secularism' and 'national programme of European membership' to postpone membership. The programme suggests that it was formulated by those who are hostage to their own short-term interests. On 4 October 2001, the Turkish Parliament passed a package of 34 constitutional amendments that paved the way for lifting a ban on Kurdish-language broadcasting, once corresponding media legislation is amended. However, the Turkish military has already expressed its opposition to such a change.

In addition to legal and political changes, Turkey is also seeking to address the economic problems of the region. Relative deprivation of the Kurdish regions is interpreted as 'discrimination' by the nationalist Kurds and the source of Kurdish radicalism by the state. Indeed, Gurr's seminal study indicates that relative deprivation politicizes ethnic identities.⁴⁹ Regional inequalities are interpreted along ethnic lines in Turkey. The Kurdish Left has been the most active force to present the regional inequality as the manifestation of Turkish 'discrimination' against the Kurds. The Kurdish regions are amongst the poorest in Turkey. The Turkish state has introduced a number of economic initiatives to tackle the Kurdish question. Destruction is the price of progress in southeast Anatolia. Turkey is involved in the \$32 billion Southeastern Anatolian Project (GAP), a network of 22 dams and 19 hydroelectric plants, which is the key to the economic development of Upper Mesopotamia. It will irrigate 2,500 square miles of land and affect the lives of 6.5 million people in this region. The government of Turkey sees this project as a way of addressing the Kurdish problem, though the Kurdish question extends beyond poverty to issues of cultural and political rights. For instance, Prime Minister Bülent Ecevit believes that 'there is no Kurdish problem in Turkey but the problem of feudalism and economic backwardness.' Indeed, the socio-economic structure of the region has played an important role in the formation of Kurdish ethno-nationalism. However, one needs to take political and cultural factors into account as well.

At the core of the contemporary crisis in Turkey lie three sociopolitical consequences of Kemalism: (1) its uncritical modernization ideology prevents open discussion that would lead to a new and inclusive social

contract that recognizes the cultural diversity of Turkey; (2) it does not tolerate the articulation of different identities and lifestyles in the public sphere since they undermine the Kemalist vision of an ideal society; and (3) it treats politics as a process of guiding political development and engineering a new society.⁵⁰ Thus, Kemalism does not see social, cultural, and political difference as an integral part of democracy, but rather treats socio-political 'difference' as a source of instability and a threat to national unity. The current ethnic (Kurdish) and religious (Sunni Islamic and Alevi) movements seek to redefine themselves as 'Muslims', 'Kurds' and 'Alevis' through the means provided by globalization. These identity- and justice-seeking social movements are in direct conflict with the Kemalist project. Turkey needs a new social contract. The founding principles of this contract should include the Anglo-Saxon conception of secularism, the rule of law and recognition of the multicultural nature of Turkey. Both Kurds and Turks need to be involved in this search for a new social contract. Turkey needs to accommodate the demands of the Kurdish nationalist movement. There are three institutional solutions to the Kurdish ethnic movements: consociationalism, electoral systems and federalism. The most likely outcome in the case of Turkey is the electoral solution: allowing Kurds to vote for any party, including an ethnic party. The representation may be based on the proportion of votes that candidates receive. Turkey has to realize that too much centralization causes rebellion, and too little centralization would cause fragmentation. Turkey needs to develop a balance between centralization and decentralization; between the imposition of direct and indirect rule.

Conclusion

The collapse of the multi-ethnic Ottoman empire and the formation of ethnically-based nationalist regimes are the root-causes of the politicization and radicalization of the Kurdish identity. Successful Turkish modernization, increased communication, and high degrees of mobility heightened and mobilized ethnic Kurdish consciousness. This radicalized Kurdish nationalism, which in turn, politicized and popularized Turkish nationalism. Today, there is a heightened Kurdish consciousness, but very little unity due to competing sub-ethnic loyalties. The Kurds need to recognize that there is no territorial or political room in the Middle East for an independent state of Kurdistan.⁵¹ Turkey also must recognize the cultural rights of the Kurds and search for a new social contract in which the cultural mosaic of Turkey can flourish. The Kurdish problem impedes necessary legal reforms and the implementation of democratic and human rights in Turkey. Moreover, the Kurdish problem has seriously constrained Turkey's

foreign policy by giving foreign states a powerful opening with which to pressure Ankara. It has become the main obstacle to Turkey's drive for full membership in the EU.

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NOTES

1. For a background of Kurdish ethno-nationalism in Turkey, see M. Hakan Yavuz (ed.), 'The Kurdish Question in Turkey', Special Issue, *Journal of Muslim Minority Affairs*, Vol.18, No.1 (1998); M. Hakan Yavuz, 'Turkey's Fault Lines and the Crisis of Kemalism', *Current History*, Vol.99 (January 2000), pp.33–39; M. Hakan Yavuz and Michael Gunter, 'The Kurdish Nation', *Current History*, Vol.100 (January 2001), pp.33–39; Kemal Kirişçi and Gareth M. Winrow, *The Kurdish Question and Turkey: An Example of a Trans-State Ethnic Conflict* (London and Portland, OR: Frank Cass, 1997); Martin van Bruinessen, *Agha, Shaikh and State* (London: Zed, 1992); David McDowall, *A Modern History of the Kurds* (London: I.B. Tauris, 1996); Henri J. Barkey and Graham E. Fuller, *Turkey's Kurdish Question* (New York: Rowman and Littlefield, 1998).
2. For more on the difference of the imperial and modern state, see David Held, 'The Development of the Modern State', in Stuart Hall *et al* (eds.), *Modernity* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1995), pp.55–69.
3. Tom Nairn explains the formation and diffusion of nationalism in terms of uneven economic development. In the case of Kurdish nationalism, one also needs a particular ethnic identity to translate regional economic disparities into a nationalist movement. Tom Nairn, *The Break-up of Britain: Crisis and Neo-Nationalism* (London: New Left Books, 1977).
4. For more on the role of 'entrepreneurs', see Crawford Young, *The Politics of Cultural Pluralism* (Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1976), pp.28 and 45–46.
5. For instance, Mesut Yeğen assumes there was a full-fledged Kurdish nationalism and focuses on the state strategies rather than problematizing Kurdish nationalism. See Yeğen, 'The Kurdish Question in Turkish State Discourse', *Journal of Contemporary History*, Vol.34, No.4 (1999), pp.555–68.
6. There is no doubt that the Kurdish cultural identity existed before the modern era. One finds necessary 'ethnic core', from Anthony Smith's perspective, in the pre-modern tribal structure of the Kurds. However, this 'ethnic core' was politicized and turned into nationalism as a reaction to the invasive inroads (imposing direct rule and the penetration of capitalism) that Turkish, Iranian, and Iraqi nationalist movements made against the Kurdish communities after the collapse of the Ottoman Empire, Anthony D. Smith, *The Ethnic Origins of Nations* (New York: Blackwell, 1986). However, Kurdish nationalism has been heavily influenced by the pre-modern tribal social structure. Just as Hecter suggests, nationalism is very much an outcome of the centralizing state policies. For more on the theoretical approach to nationalism, see Michael Hecter, *Containing Nationalism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000).
7. *Aga* means landlord and usually the head of the tribe; *Şeyh*, is the leader of Sufi order; and *Seyyid* is believed to be coming from Prophet Muhammed's geneology. They all have different roles, but they are the integrating personalities of the Kurdish society. Necdet Subaşı, 'Şeyh, Seyyid ve Molla: Güneydoğu Anadolu Örneğinde Dinsel İtibarn Kategorileri', *İslamiyat*, Vol.2, No.3 (1999), pp.121–40.
8. Middle East Watch, *Genocide in Iraq: The Anfal Campaign Against the Kurds* (New York: Human Rights Watch, 1993). This book details Saddam Hussein's attacks against the Kurds.
9. For more on the Alevi identity, M. Hakan Yavuz, 'Değişim Sürecindeki Alevi Kimliği/Die alewitische Identität im Veränderungsprozeß', *Aleviler: Identität und Geschichte*, Vol.1 (Hamburg: Deutsche Orient-Institut, 2000), pp.75–95; Krisztina Kehl-Bodrogi, 'Kurds, Turks,

- or a People in Their Own Right? Competing Collective Identities Among the Zazas', *Muslim World*, Vol.89, No.3-4 (1999), pp.439-54.
10. Müfid Yüksel, *Kürdistan'da Değişim Süreci* (Ankara: Sor, 1993), pp.50-70; İsmail Kara, 'Kürt Medreseleri Gündeme Gelecek mi?' in Kara, *Seyhufendinin Rüyasındaki Türkiye* (İstanbul: Kitab, 1998), pp.69-72; Martin van Bruinessen, *Mullas, Sufis and Heretics: The Role of Religion in Kurdish Society* (İstanbul: ISIS, 2000).
 11. Van Bruinessen, *Agha*, (1992), p.189.
 12. İsmail Göldaş, *Kürdistan Teali Cemiyeti* (İstanbul: Doz, 1991); Naci Kutlay, *İttihat Terakki ve Kürtler* (Ankara: Beybun, 1992), pp.218-27.
 13. İsmail Göldaş, *Lozan: 'Biz Türkler ve Kürtler'* (İstanbul: Avesta, 2000).
 14. Halil Şimşek, *Şeyh Sa'id İsyanı ve PKK* (İstanbul: Harp Akademileri, 2000). This book is written by an active duty general. He examines the Seyh Said Rebellion as an ethnic movement. According to Şimşek, although Seyh Said used Islam, his real goal was to 'carve an independent Kurdish state' (p.31). For more on the changing views of the Turkish military, Genel Kurnay Başkanlığı, *100 Soru ve Cevapta Türk Silahlı Kuvvetleri ve Terörle Mücadele* (Ankara: Genel Kurnay İGHD Başkanlığı, 1998), pp.1-45.
 15. Robert Olson, 'The Kurdish Rebellions of Sheikh Said (1925), Mt Ararat (1930), and Dersim (1937-38): Their Impact on the Development of the Turkish Air Force and on Kurdish and Turkish Nationalism', *Die Welt des Islams*, Vol.40 (2000), pp.67-94.
 16. Umit Cizre Sakallıoğlu, 'Kurdish Nationalism from an Islamic Perspective', *Journal of Muslim Minority Affairs*, Vol.18, No.1 (1998), pp.73-90; Burhanettin Duran, 'Approaching the Kurdish Question via Adil Düzen: An Islamist Formula of the Welfare Party for Ethnic Coexistence', *Journal of Muslim Minority Affairs*, Vol.18, No.1 (1998), pp.111-28.
 17. Türkiye ahalisine din ve ırk farkı olmaksızın vatandaşlık itibarıyla Türk itlak olunur.
 18. İsmail Besikci, *Doğu Mitingleri'nin Analizi* (1967) (Ankara: Yurt, 1992).
 19. M. Ali Birand, *Apo ve PKK* (İstanbul: Milliyet, 1992), p.83.
 20. *Devrimci Doğu Kültür Ocakları Dava Dosyası* (Ankara: Komal, 1975), pp.25-29. This book provides the best picture about the Turkish state discourse on the Kurdish question, along with the publications of DDKO, in the late 1960s and early 1970s. DDKO played an important role in the construction of a Kurdish political consciousness.
 21. Ömer Laciner, *Kürt Sorunu: Henüz Vakit Varken* (İstanbul: Birikim, 1991).
 22. Birand, *Apo*, pp.36, 121. Öcalan explains how he punished his bird and dog because he perceived their act as disloyal. There is a fine analysis of Öcalan's mindset by Vamik Volkan, *Bloodlines : From Ethnic Pride to Ethnic Terrorism* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1997), pp.168-80.
 23. Vera Eccarius-Kelly, 'Political Movements and Leverage Points: Kurdish Diaspora Activism in Europe', Unpublished paper (2001).
 24. *PKK Terrorism* (Ankara: Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 1998), p.13. This booklet is prepared to inform the public about the PKK activities.
 25. Yasin Aktay, 'Güneydoğu'da İntihar: Kalan Sağlar Bizimdir', *Tezkire*, No.18 (2001), pp.33-48. Aktay examines the reasons of high suicide rate in Batman. He identifies the weakening of traditional ties and the new culture of violence which celebrates death as a way of 'purifying the self'. He makes implicit links between the conflict and the new culture.
 26. Zeynep Gökçe Akgür, *Türkiye'de Kırsal Kesimden Kente Göç ve Bölgeler Arası Dengesizlik (1970-1993)* (Ankara: Kültür Bakanlığı, 1997), pp.67-9. Mert Gözde, 'Parliamentary Commission Reports on Migration. 4,000 villages evacuated, 1 million people displaced', *Turkish Daily News*, 30 January 2001. The Parliamentary Report said that 'during a 14-year process in the course of which the security forces fought with the militants of the outlawed Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK), some 4,000 villages and hamlets had been evacuated in the East and the Southeast and that 1 million people had migrated from the region.'
 27. Human Rights Watch, 'What is Turkey's Hizbullah', 16 February 2000.
 28. *Hürriyet*, 17 September 1998.
 29. For details, see the statement by Dylan Semsî Kılıç - a close associate of Öcalan's and an eyewitness to his capture, broadcast over the PKK's MED-TV and accessed over the Internet, 21 Feb. 1999; Tim Weiner, 'U.S. Helped Turkey Find and Capture Kurd Rebel', *New York Times*, 20 Feb. 1999; Marcus Gee, 'The Odyssey of a Kurdish Hot Potato', *The Globe and Mail* (Toronto), 24 Feb. 1999; Helena Smith, Chris Morris, and Ed Vulliamy, 'Global Plot that Lured Kurds' Hero into Trap', *Observer* (London), 21 Feb., 1999; and İsmet Berkan, 'The Story of Apo's Capture', *Radikal* (İstanbul), 17 Feb., 1999. Turkish prime minister Bülent Ecevit

- declined to elaborate on any of the details, and merely cited a Turkish proverb: 'Let us eat the grape and not ask where it came from'.
30. 'Turks vs. Kurds: Turning Point', *New York Times*, 21 February 1999, p.8.
 31. Cited in Michael Gunter, 'The continuing Kurdish problem in Turkey after Öcalan's capture', *Third World Quarterly*, Vol.21, No.5 (2000), p.851.
 32. 'MED-TV Reports More on PKK Statement on Congress Result', Foreign Broadcast Information Service-Near East/South Asia, FBIS-WEU-1999-0304, 4 March 1999.
 33. Abdullah Öcalan, *Declaration on the Democratic Solution of the Kurdish Question*, trans. from the Turkish original by the Kurdistan Information Centre (London: Mesopotamian Publishers, 1999), p.18.
 34. The European Court of Human Rights has passed twenty-six successful judgements in cases brought by the London-based Kurdish Human Rights Project, headed by Kerim Yıldız, the majority of which have centred on the right to life (Article 2), prohibition of torture (Article 3), right to a fair trial (Article 6), right to an effective remedy (Article 13) and freedom of expression (Article 10). (The European Court of Human Rights was set up in Strasbourg in 1959 to deal with alleged violations of the 1950 European Convention on Human Rights. On 1 November 1998, a full-time Court was established, replacing the original two-tier system of a part-time Commission and Court).
 35. Most of the Kurdish intellectuals and politicians support Turkey's membership in the EU. However, a small group of Kurdish nationalists sees the membership as an obstacle to achieve a united Kurdish state. See 'Serafettin Elçi discusses Kurd Party with Swedish Foreign Minister', *Turkish Daily News*, 22 February 2000.
 36. 'Yılmaz: Road to EU Passes through Diyarbakır', *Turkish Daily News*, 17 December 1999. Diyarbakır is the largest city in Southeast Anatolia, the majority of its population is made up of Kurds.
 37. 'The Road to the EU', *Briefing*, 20 December 1999, p.11.
 38. The more on Asparuk's comments, see *Financial Times*, 17 February 2000; Sükrü Elekdağ, 'DPT'nin Siyasi Kriterler Raporu', *Milliyet*, (6 March 2000. In order to organize legal changes according to the Copenhagen criteria, the State Planning Organization (DPT) prepared a report on 28 February 2000, which included a major constitutional and legal reform in Turkey.
 39. For more on the reaction to 'minority rights', see Onur Öymen, 'Bu Sevr korkusu yersizdir', *Radikal*, 11 September 2000.
 40. See *Milliyet*, 28 November 2000; *Turkish Daily News*, 29 November 2000. Atasagun stated in his interview that '[t]he Turkish Republic was unable to win over their (Kurdish) mothers. According to some studies, 60 percent of the mothers in the region do not know Turkish. We never set up a system to win them over. This state did not know how to address the mothers. Had we been able to win them over, the issue would not have lasted until today. We noted this for many years but we could not get anything achieved'.
 41. *Hürriyet*, 29 November 2000.
 42. *Turkish Daily News*, 15 November 2000.
 43. EU membership is likely to offer proof that a Kurd in modern Turkey need not diminish his identity at the price of worldly achievement or consider such ethnic identity alone a replacement for the crucible of public life. Turkey has been confronted with the Copenhagen criteria and the February 28 processes. For instance, after the EU decision, a number of European initiatives to highlight the Kurdish problem, raised the suspicion of Ankara.
 44. Agence France-Presse, 15 November 2000.
 45. *Hürriyet*, 7 December 2000.
 46. Avni Özgürel, 'Sessizlik ve sonuçları', *Radikal*, 4 August 2000.
 47. 'Elçi: We Want the Right to Education and Broadcasting in Kurdish', *Turkish Daily News*, 29 August 2000.
 48. For full text see, <http://www.mersina.com/special/article.asp?cid=39#1.2.9>
 49. Ted Robert Gurr, *Why Men Rebel* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1970).
 50. Yavuz, 'Turkey's Fault', p.34.
 51. Although there are de facto Kurdish states in Iraq protected by the US, this will not result in the formation of an independent Kurdish state because of internal divisions between the Kurdish administrations of Barzani and Talabani. Moreover, neighbouring countries will not tolerate the formation of an independent Kurdish state. For instance, the government of Turkey has made its position very clear that if the Iraqi Kurds seek to establish an independent state, Turkey will consider this move as an act of aggression to its own territorial unity.